



## SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

September 23, 2020

The Honorable Aimee Jorjani, Chairman  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
401 F Street Northwest, Suite 308  
Washington, DC 20001  
[ajorjani@achp.gov](mailto:ajorjani@achp.gov)

Dear Chairman Jorjani:

The Society for American Archaeology (SAA) urges the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) to ask the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to extend the review of the FCC's proposed program comment for the "Twilight Towers" an additional ninety days. We concur with our colleagues at the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (NATHPO) that the ACHP's consultation with Tribes, THPOs and Native Hawaiian organizations in this matter was inadequate, and requires additional time to carry out careful and thorough discussion.

The SAA is an international organization that, since its founding in 1934, has been dedicated to research about and interpretation and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. With nearly 7,000 members, SAA represents professional and avocational archaeologists, archaeology students in colleges and universities, and archaeologists working at Tribal agencies, museums, government agencies, and the private sector. SAA has members throughout the U.S., as well as in many nations around the world.

As you know, under the regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the ACHP has forty-five days to comment, decline to comment, request additional documentation, or obtain the consent of the agency to extend the period for providing comment on a proposed program. The ACHP is also required to consult with Indian tribes, Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs), and Native Hawaiian organizations (NHOs) on the program comment. SAA understands that the ACHP received the FCC's proposed program comment on August 24, 2020, but did not notify Tribes or THPOs until September 11, 2020. Further, the ACHP proposed only two consultations, via videoconference, and only gave the tribes and THPOs five days to prepare for the first consultation call.

This is simply inadequate. The pandemic's strain on all of the nation's enterprises and communities, and the resulting economic contraction, has been even more severe for many tribes and NHOs. They have smaller staffs and fewer resources. Consequently, some tribal preservationists must play multiple roles in helping their communities respond to COVID-19, and cannot devote their undivided attention to this issue.

The Twilight Towers matter is a long-standing and complex matter. More time and consultations are needed in order for tribes to meaningfully participate in the process, as required by the NHPA and its regulations. The SAA urges the ACHP to extend the program comment review period and schedule

additional consultation meetings with the tribes and NHOs to ensure that their viewpoints are taken into consideration.

Thank you for your time and attention to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joe E. Watkins". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

Joe E. Watkins, Ph.D., RPA  
President